

time as any to express my viewpoints, then I will withhold from saying any further, or holding any further comments about this bill. My opposition to the bill stems from the fact that I feel there are other funding sources that need to be looked at. Unfortunately, those funding sources have not yet reached the floor of the Legislature for discussion. I believe that once LB 148 is passed, and I agree with Senator Rupp, I think the bill is probably in the form that it is going to pass in, that there will be people in this Legislature that will feel that we have carried out our duty to the natural resource districts to provide them with funding, and that we no longer need to address the concern of funding for water projects, soil projects, and so forth. For me, it puts me in a state of dilemma because I don't want to be a hypocrite in helping mandate a number of these programs as I have worked with Senator Schmit and others on this floor in the past couple of years to address water quality concerns that this state has had. But I feel that there are other funding areas that need to be equally addressed on this floor that probably will not make it to this floor, simply because 148 is passed. We've given the natural resource districts now the ability to increase their levy, and we've done our duty to the natural resource sector. But, to me, that only shortchanges the discussion that we need to bring up on this floor of other areas of funding for water resources and soil resources. So, all I am saying I guess, and I'll close by making this point, I am opposing the bill, not so much the concept of not giving additional revenue to our natural resource districts, because I have, as much as anyone in this body, stood up on this floor and spoken in favor of giving these natural resource districts new duties to take care of. My concern is that there are specifically some other proposals in natural resources, principally the appropriations process, that probably now will not be discussed because 148 has passed, or will pass, I assume, at some particular point. And, unfortunately, we will never get around to that discussion. As I said, I think there will be some that will feel we have fulfilled our obligation in this sector. I don't think we are going to get the type of discussion that we have had on this issue on some of the others. So, if those bills would reach the floor, I would say this that I probably would be a strong spokesman in favor of some of those issues. But, unfortunately,...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: ...I don't anticipate that they will get here. So, even though I have helped mandate a number of these